

no MEMORY, HABIT, AND
IMITATION

discoveries are made by accident.
But it is
doubtful whether these accidents have
occurred
to men who were not prepared to
welcome them.
It may be objected again that undue
stress has
been laid upon the power of the will
in the
assembling of the materials with which
imagina-
tion fashions its designs. Every writer
is well
aware of the assistance which he owes
to sub-
conscious thought: ideas and sentences
suddenly
present themselves to him, as the
spontaneous
offerings of his brain, that are
astonishingly
superior to those which he has been
able to con-
jure up by the concentration of his
will. Not a
few may confess to ideas that have
come to them
during sleep, and did not vanish before
they could
be recorded. It is said, indeed, that
Coleridge
awoke one morning with *Christabel*
ready com-
posed in his brain. But the theme to
which these
suggestions contribute has previously
been en-
shrined as the altar-piece of a mental
disposition:
the memory has been reasserting its
treasures
subconsciously, but under an impulse
which it
received from conscious volition.
Imagination
may then be defined as the assembling
of memories
which have been reasserted by emotion
under the
influence of the will.

The effect of a mental disposition, or "field of volition,"⁵⁵ is familiar to many of us in the process by which we call to mind a name that has escaped us. We try to recollect it, but in vain ;

we cease
to strive after it, when it suddenly
presents
itself. Influenced by our desire, the
memory-
stream has subconsciously delivered
up the
symbol which would not obey the
summons of
conscious effort.

By imagination we can repeat
emotional ex-
periences of the past. Direct
recollections of them
may be but pale, sentimental,
reflections of the